



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/580,498	05/30/2000	Shinya Kamimura	925-143	8341
23117	7590	06/23/2005	EXAMINER	
NIXON & VANDERHYE, PC 901 NORTH GLEBE ROAD, 11TH FLOOR ARLINGTON, VA 22203			AGGARWAL, YOGESH K	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2615	

DATE MAILED: 06/23/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/580,498	Applicant(s) KAMIMURA ET AL.	
	Examiner Yogesh K. Aggarwal	Art Unit 2615	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 April 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 4 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 May 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 04/04/2005 has been entered.

Drawings

2. Figures 6-9 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tokumitsu (US Patent # 6,008,511) in view of Hoopman (US Patent # 5,439,621).

[Claim 1]

Art Unit: 2615

Tokumitsu discloses a solid-state image sensor used inherently in devices like cameras or other imaging devices (figure 3), which comprises a plurality of light-receiving parts (pixels 3a-0, 3b-0 etc.) arranged at a constant interval on a substrate surface and a plurality of light focusing parts (microlenses 1a-0, 1b-0, 1a-1 etc.) disposed corresponding to each of the plurality of the light-receiving parts on the substrate surface (11) so that the incident light is focused on the light receiving parts (col. 3 lines 54-64). Tokumitsu further teaches that the distances $da1$ - $da3$ (offset amounts) corresponding to the center of the microlenses 1a-1 through 1a-3 and pixels in the peripheral ends are determined to increase at a predetermined rate as the pixels become distant from the center towards the periphery (col. 3 line 65-col. 4 line 47, figure 3) and therefore reads on wherein the position of the center of each of the light focusing parts is shifted gradually larger toward the center of the camera region based on the position of each of the light-receiving parts corresponding to the light focusing parts.

Tokumitsu fails to disclose that the size of the microlenses along the substrate surface in the lateral direction becomes gradually larger, as the location of the light focusing part is getting closer to the peripheral region from the middle camera region.

However Hoopman discloses a microlens array as a group of lenses used as a focusing means or an image forming means so as to increase the sensitivity of a primary image sensor (Background of the invention). Hoopman further teaches that the desired lens radius, R_s , may vary across the array e.g, it may be shorter toward the center of the array than at the periphery (col. 9 lines 22-25). Therefore size of the microlenses along the substrate surface in the lateral direction becomes gradually larger, as the location of the light focusing part is getting closer to

Art Unit: 2615

the peripheral region from the middle camera region in order to have an optimum performance for the array as a whole.

Therefore taking the combined teachings of Tokumitsu and Hoopman, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to have been motivated to have the size of the microlenses along the substrate surface in the lateral direction becomes gradually larger, as the location of the light focusing part is getting closer to the peripheral region from the middle camera region in order to have an optimum performance for the array as a whole as taught in Hoopman (col. 9 lines 26-28).

[Claims 2 and 3]

Tokumitsu discloses a two-dimensional array (figure 2). Therefore the direction from the center of the camera region to the peripheral camera region corresponds to the lateral and longitudinal direction of the solid-state camera device.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Yogesh K. Aggarwal whose telephone number is (571) 272-7360. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:00AM-5:30PM.


5. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Ometz can be reached on (571)-272-7593. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 2615

6. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

YKA

June 19, 2005



DAVID L. OMETZ
PRIMARY EXAMINER